

The Connecticut Section Of The Green Mountain Club

The Trail Talk

VOL. XXXIX NO. II

April 2009



In Memory Of

ROBERT V POOLE
OCTOBER 12, 1923 – MARCH 18, 2009

The CT. Section has lost a very dear and special member. Bob passed away on March 18, 2009 at Middlesex Hospital surrounded by his family and wife Eleanor. He was one of the founders of the CT. Section. During his forty years as a member he led maintenance trips on the Mattabesett Trail in CT., and the Long Trail in Vermont. He enjoyed being outside hiking in the woods and canoeing the rivers of CT. and VT.

Bob lived 60 years in Middlefield in a home that he built. He was a Superintendent at Mt. Higby Reservoir, and leader in the Boy Scouts. Bob and Eleanor spent their Honeymoon at Upper Goose Pond and then became caretakers with the AMC each summer. Eleanor is still caretaking at Upper Goose Pond for a week each summer.



In the 70's Bob led snowshoe trips to Mt. Higby and canoe trips into Upper Goose Pond which became annual events. Bob and Eleanor also led trips to Derrybrook Barn in Rawsonville, Vermont and have continued to lead this trip every year. Bob would usually be the first one up and soon everyone would smell the coffee and pancakes.

The Pooles attended the Intersectional Outings that were held from the late 1970's into the late 1980's. It was a week long event of all the sections coming together for hikes, canoe and bike trips. Everyone knew the Poole family was coming when they saw the Volkswagen Bus Camper and out stepped the big guy with the "Plaid Shirt." This is how most of us will remember this great man.

The CT. Section expresses their sincere sympathy to Eleanor and her family.

Aspetuck Valley Trail Hike January 25, 2009

This is a new blue trail not in the Walk Book yet, it will probably be in the next edition. It is a pleasant walk along a stream & along some old roads and through woodlands, which have been wild for over 70 years. It dead ends into Huntington State Park and so after hiking the 5.5 mile trail there is another 2.2 or so to get back to the parking lot.

There were 4-6 inches of snow on the ground and some icy patches in the heavily used state park. The morning temperature was in the single digits but by hike time was nearly 20 and it warmed up to the high 20s. The sky was brilliantly clear and there was no wind. It was a thoroughly pleasant day to hike.

There are several road crossings and we passed by a few houses, one of which is a log cabin with stained glass windows. It also has a log cabin-type tree fort, which would be a really cool shelter.

We completed the 7.7 miles in a little over 3 ½ hours including a short lunch break.

*Hikers: Tina Maripuu, Russ Charest, Roger Hibbert
Leader: Mike Cunningham*



Farmington Linear Trail February 28, 2009

The Appalachian Trail is a rugged, mountain path through the wilderness. In contrast, the East Coast Greenway (<http://www.greenway.org/>) connects urban centers. About 20% is completed along pathways that separate foot or bike traffic from motor vehicles. The goal is to provide a continuous trail from Key West to the Canadian boarder.

The Trail Talk

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<http://www.conngmc.com>

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The Trail Talk is published four times a year in January, April, July and October. Activity schedules are included in each issue. Reports of activities and articles must be sent to the editor no later than the tenth day of the month of the publication. Send articles to:

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Membership

When filling out the form to join or renew, circle the Connecticut Section on the application to receive, at no extra charge, the Connecticut Section's newsletter and activity schedule.

Dues:

Individual Adult \$ 40.00

Family \$ 50.00

Senior (70 or older) or Limited Income \$ 22.00

Nonprofit or Youth Group \$ 50.00

Business or Corporation \$150.00

Send annual dues to:

The Green Mountain Club

4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road

Waterbury Center, VT 05677-9904

(802) 244-7037, <http://www.greenmountainclub.org>

Connecticut Section Of The GMC

Post & Receive Messages, Photos, Other Activities

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ct_green_mountain_club/

Having said that, it was clear that we should take advantage of all that an urban setting has to offer. These included stops at a Mexican restaurant and Dunkin' Donuts (twice!) To use the bathrooms, of course. We normally don't consider beer and nachos part of GMC sanctioned activities. (Maybe this should this be an item for discussion at our next annual meeting.) Anyway. Most of the day was spent in forested settings, along a wide paved trail that allowed us to walk three and four abreast for social interaction.

We met in a parking lot behind a supermarket and marched across brown fields in remediation. There was still a little ice and snow on the pavement. The Greenway has historical markers along the way describing the history of the trail as a rail corridor, and as a canal before that. One marker shows how the rail line provided service all the way to the top of Mt. Washington in the White Mountains. Well, maybe not a part of today's hike.

It was a great day to be out. Just enough spring chill to keep us moving along. Don and Sarah had other appointments and bailed out half-way in a car staged along the way. (Does a loss of 40% of hike participants constitute a club record or could this be attributed to the poor economy?) Mary, Dick, and Dan made it all the way back to our starting point but we were all dragging our heels by the end. It is time to get in shape if we are going to take this linear trail to Mt Washington. Perhaps another day?

*Don Hagestrom, Dick Krompegal,
Mary O'Neill, Sarah O'Hare
Leader: Dan Zelerman*



Zoar Trail Sunday, March 8, 2009

The Zoar Trail is named as such for much of it follows along the shore of Lake Zoar, which is part of the Housatonic River. This 6.5 mile loop trail, a DEP -designated scenic trail, is located in the Paugussett State Forest in Southbury. We began at the parking area at the end of Great Quarter Road and followed the trail atop the bank of Lake Zoar for 2.4 miles. A few boats were out on the water this warm and sunny morning. The trail took us up a few steep sections, through Mountain Laurel and across several brooks. Our lunch stop was at Pryddan Brook, its many waterfalls making it the perfect place for a break. With renewed energy and Sinai, Ann's pup, leading the way, we hiked the last few miles enjoying this late winter's spring-like day. Several of us, with pizza on our minds, stopped in Derby to give in to our pizza craving.

*Hikers: Donald "Woody" Woodbridge, Mary O'Neill, Don Hagestrom, Bill Falconer, Dick Hart, Ann Gurske and Sinai
Leader: Sarah O'Hare*

The Trail Talk

Tunxis Trail, Tipping Rock Loop, Valley Outlook Trail and Shelter Four Loop Tuesday, March 24, 2009

On this cold and sunny early spring morning our group gathered at the Nepaug State Forest entrance on Rt. 202. The plan was to begin our 8 mile hike on the Tunxis Mainline Trail and explore the three side trails between Rts. 202 and 44. The hike began with a gentle climb and within a few minutes George pointed out what appeared to be a large claw mark in the frozen mud at the base of a tree. A bear's futile attempt at digging for grubs perhaps? Much of the Tunxis Trail here followed along an old dirt road, still covered with ice and snow making for careful footing. We turned onto Tipping Rock Loop, a pretty trail taking us through stands of pines and Mountain Laurel. Turning southwest onto the Valley Outlook Trail, we picked up our pace for lunch was planned at its end, on a rockledge with a view of the Nepaug Valley. However, the strong wind had us head for a more sheltered area off the trail.

Retracing our steps along this 1.2 mile dead-end trail, we once again connected with Tipping Rock Loop. The map points to a location of the actual Tipping Rock, which, according to the trail description, tips no longer. We were uncertain as to exactly which boulder this 'tipping rock' was and giving up, we continued on. We found ourselves in an especially scenic area of the state forest. There were rock cliffs and brooks and apparently others have found it pleasant, too, for there was a small campground with a large fire ring, complete with a pile of split wood at the ready. We soon stepped onto the Tunxis Trail, turned right, then left onto Shelter Four Loop. This short, one mile trail brought us back to the Tunxis one last time and then on to our starting point. Back at our cars, Bill produced a small cake, complete with candles, and we all enjoyed a little birthday celebration for the hike leader. Thank you all for sharing a special day with me!

*Hikers: George Jackson, Don Hagstrom,
Sandra Hassan, Bill Falconer
Leader: Sarah O'Hare*

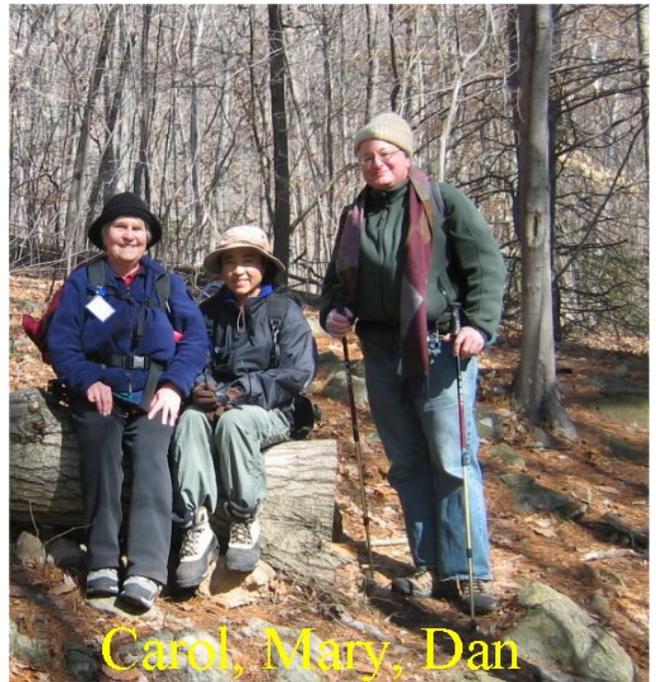


Sleeping Giant S.P. February 14, 2009

The plan was to hike all the red trails that crossover the Sleeping Giant from N-S and get our HEARTS pumping. Leaving the parking area around 9:45 Dick Krompegal, Dan Zelterman and I left in search of the Red Triangle using the Blue Crossover Trail. Our first stop was the Old Quarry, then and Old Cement Building that Dan

thought was used for explosives from the mining days the trail took us down to the Mill River. Walking along the river was very peaceful during this time some speculation was made as to what fish lived in the Mill River and if we could canoe it. Following the trail out to Tuttle Rd. to make it official we then crossed back and intersected with the Red Hexagon Trail. The climb was up-up-up and as we were taking a short break to catch our breath, whom do we seeing coming up the trail but Mary O'Neill – glad you could make and caught up with us. We had started at the elevation of 110 and in half mile we reached 550 ft. Then over the Giant and down to 220 ft where we connected with the Yellow Trail for about a 1/2 mile planning to connect with the Red Diamond.

The Yellow Trail connects with the Red Diamond at 260 ft which took us scrambling over some rocks that continued up and up until we reached 600 ft. At this point we were rewarded for our hard work by a Beautiful Red Tail Hawk, just east of us as it glided gracefully through the trees out of



our vision. As we started down the rocks and ice we met a hiker coming up the trail with a full backpack. Talking to the hiker we learned that he was using the trails to condition and train for a trip to Death Valley in Utah this spring.

It was almost 1:00 by the time we were able to get down the trail and decided to take a lunch break. There was a nice log we used as a bench for our lunch. In the field across the road horses grazed and we wondered what could they be eating – but the horses seemed to be satisfied with what they were eating. A short walk on the road brought us to the Red Dot Cascade Trail. This is one of my favorite trails in the park. Along the way we stopped for photos and even a cave to have a picture taken in. Not much ice so we moved along keeping our "Hearts Pumping".

The Trail Talk

As we intersected the White Trail along the right leg we started wondering if we could do another ascent and decent. The last Red Trail was farthest north and would probably have quite a bit of ice. A decision was made to finish up the Red Dot and follow it out to Mt. Carmel Ave and walk the road back to the parking lot. I asked the question who wants to go for Pizza or Ice Cream and Dan's response was "Who wants to go to Dan's house for Pasta"?

A great dinner was prepared by Dan and his kitchen helpers, pasta and meatballs, tossed salad, garlic bread and a beverage of your choice. Thanks Dan for a great ending to a wonderful day of hiking with GMC friends.

*Hikers: Mary O'Neill, Carol A. Langley, Dick Krompegal
Leader: Dan Zelterman,*

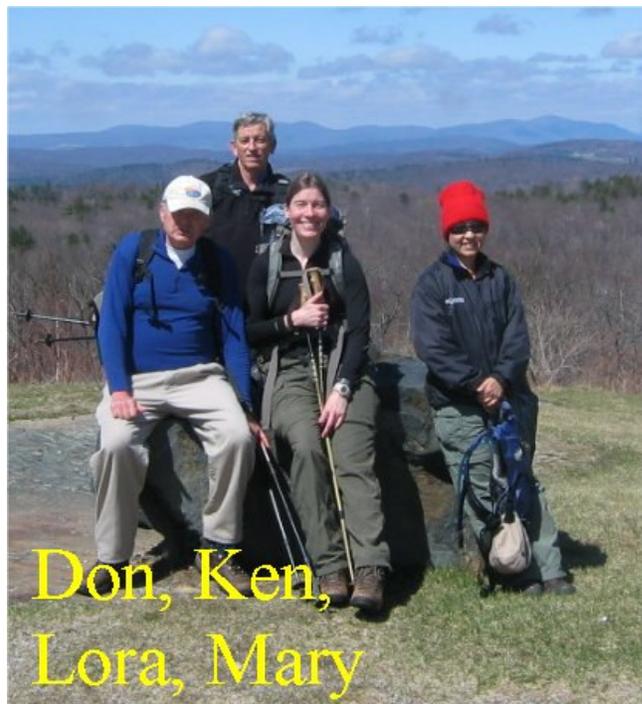


Mattatuck Trail, Mohawk Mountain Section Sunday, April 5, 2009

Five of us gathered for this hike, all suitably dressed for the day's anticipated high of approximately 60 degrees. Unfortunately, it was 37 degrees and windy, so we were all rather chilly to start, and none more so than the leader who had just discovered a leak in the hose to her hydration pack that kept a steady drip of water onto her jacket! However, we got started and warmed up promptly as we set off into the woods.

The early part of the hike near Flat Rocks Road was simple and pleasant, through stands of mature trees. We crossed a stone wall with impressively large rocks before reaching a paved road. After a quick stretch on the road we went back to the unpaved Perkins Road before reaching what was described as "a wet and difficult passage" over a large beaver dam. The description was apt. The beaver dam offered little secure footing, and at one point we had to cross a 6 foot stretch of (approximately 3 feet deep) water by inching across a 6 inch diameter log next to two wobbly, partially submerged 3 inch logs.

Once we had navigated the beaver dam, we thought we had seen the worst of it...but in a few tenths of a mile we came to another, larger beaver dam. While there was no water crossing on this one, the footing was less secure, and to our left the water was



Don, Ken,
Lora, Mary

The corner of Connecticut, Massachusetts
and New York in the background.

so high that it threatened to wash over the dam with every gust of wind. We were most relieved (well, at least the leader was relieved) to have this part behind us.

We quickly left the woods and turned onto the gravel road leading to Camp Mohawk. We admired Mohawk Pond briefly and then decided to stop for lunch in a sheltered spot in the woods near the pond but out of the wind. Once lunch was finished, we began a 1.9 mile climb up to the fire tower on the top of Mohawk Mountain. The enormous rocks reminded several of us of the Pennsylvania sections of the AT. We were all warming up as we approached the summit, and Mary even got down to shirtsleeves, but we quickly had to bundle up again as we reached the windy top of the mountain.

The views were spectacular, but after a photo op we quickly decided to get back into the woods to get out of the wind. The last 1 1/2 miles were marked by a remarkable number of blown-down trees that frequently obscured the trail. We rested in the relative warmth and shelter of Cunningham Tower, an abandoned stone edifice, before finishing up at Mohawk Mountain Road. Three of us ended the hike in typical GMC style by heading to West Cornwall for barbecue pizza (quite tasty).

*Hikers: Mary O'Neill, Don Hagstrom,
Dick Krompegal, Ken Williamson
Leader: Lora Miller*





**Cockaponset Trail, Wildwood Trail
and Old Forest Trail
Tuesday April 7, 2009**

"No winter lasts forever; no spring skips its turn."
Hal Borland

Spring indeed! A Mourning Cloak butterfly, frogs peeping, turtles sunning on a rock, the call of a Red-winged Blackbird and sprouting skunk cabbage, all evidence of the season's change... this was a delightful ramble through the Cockaponset Forest in Haddam.

Our 5.5 mile hike was a loop encompassing the Cockaponset Trail (between Beaver Meadow Road and Old Country Road) and its two side trails, the Mountain Laurel - lined Wildwood Trail and the Old Forest Trail. This section of the Cockaponset Trail was especially scenic - the stone bridge-walk over a brook spilling from a marsh, the rocky overlooks, stone stairways, vernal pools and the miles of old and gnarly Mountain Laurel arbors. This is a trail worthy of exploring every season of the year!

*Hikers: Mandy Brink, Don Hagstrom,
Bill Falconer, Mark Schofield
Leader: Sarah O'Hare*



**Rockledge Preserve, Madison, CT
February 16, 2009**

Another great winter hiking day and yes more ice on the trail. On this hike we had a new person Ann Gurske and her dog Sinai. Richard & Leslie Chandler brought their daughters Natasha and Tanya and the dog loved the girls. As we started on the Old Crooked Hill Trail Tanya decided to do some dog training and in minutes had Sinai jumping over sticks as we hiked along. The trail was easy hiking and very enjoyable. When we reached the Dave Houston Trail the group split up as the girls wanted to return to the car.

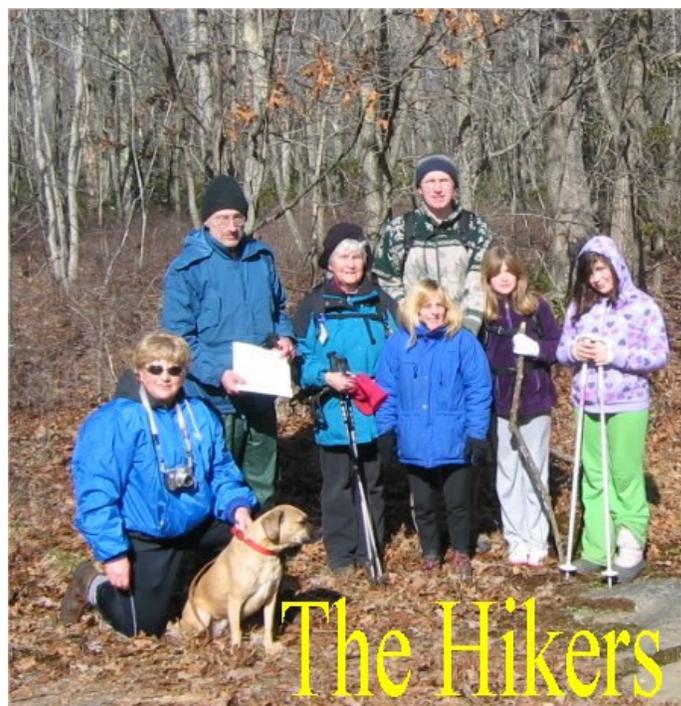
Moments we hear the girls' voices again and see Leslie and Rich climbing the Glacial Rock. This looks like fun so we all hiked over but stayed on the ground and took some pictures of the group.

Parting again we were in search of the Orange Boundary Trail which would lead us to the Lunch Rocks. While we were waiting in the parking lot for everyone a gentlemen warned us not to go out to the rocks because it would be icy. There was not a single piece of ice or any snow. Before we knew it we were standing at the base of Silent Cliffs. The sun was shining and all we heard was the rustling of leaves. Dick, Ann and Sinai found a lunch spot and sat down. Henry and Carol weren't sure where the trail went from here so we doubled back for a short distance and came back to Dick and Ann but didn't see any blazes. We decided to have lunch and worry about the blazes later, while sitting down and looking around what to we see straight ahead of us but the orange blaze.

We didn't have any ice to fall on so Ann and I took advantage of the leaves and both took a tumble. We found the Town Monument for the Madison and Guilford Boundaries. The trails are easy to follow but the maps use letters to identify things and the sign posts are using numbers. At the end of the Boundary Trail we looped back around and rejoined the Dave Houston Trail and hiked back to the parking lot.

Thanks to all who joined me on this lovely winter day:

*Dick Krompegal, Henry Smith,
Rich, Leslie, Natasha & Tanya Chandler,
Ann Gurske and Carol A. Langley*



The Trail Talk

Mary's Biennial Muddy Butt Hike

As a hiker, you know you're in for a ride when your fearless leader gets lost on the way to the hike. I lose all sense of direction on cloudy days. What can I say? We get started after my fashionably late arrival at Westwoods entrance #3 in Guilford.

In my heightened, tardiness-induced adrenaline state, I tear up the white circle trail through many intersections with the white square trail. After passing many breathtaking vistas overlooking the graffiti-laden railroad tracks, one of the other hikers suggested that we stop and wait for the rest of my charges. After we gather together and took a head count, we realized that we had lost three people! That's 25% of my group, which exceeds the acceptable loss limit of 10% or less.

Reminiscent of my military days, I run back through the woods with my backpack looking for my lost hikers. We were less than a mile into the hike, and I had found them lost on a white square trail. So as not to embarrass them, I won't mention any names, Dick, Dan, and Sandra.

After we had coalesced back into a complete group of twelve, we proceeded along the white circle trail again. The view of the rail road tracks gave way to a lovely view of Lost Lake. Now the real hike had commenced.

We then turned west onto the yellow trail where we found a couple of off-trail goodies. The first was a deep bedrock crevice that required some contortionist tactics to navigate. This was followed by a less challenging but cute climb up a ladder.

I would like to say that the rest of the hike was uneventful, but my mere liking it would not make it truthful. Apparently, bless their sweet souls, the folks who maintain the trails at Westwoods have a liking for ambiguity.

We unintentionally ended up on a square trail a couple of times when the round blazes morphed into blotches of indeterminate shapes (aka squircles) until we finally found ourselves

facing a undeniably square blaze; but isn't that part of the Westwoods charm? The monotony of the hike broken up by confusion?

My personal favorite was when we were trying to find the green trail blazes in an area also known to be traversed by the blue trail only to be confronted with a blue-green blaze. (It was like a turquoise-aqua color actually.) Just embellishing a little; the Westwoods folks do a great job with this area.

The rest of the hike was a bit more placid. We hiked on the plank walk where we saw the purple beaks of the young skunk cabbage. In the northern most part of the hike, we also saw snow drops. After the plank walk, we headed back to the cars along the orange trail. This part of the hike was fairly unremarkable, but we did see a wild pack of ravenous toy dogs.

We ended the hike at C&C Pizza in Guilford. Oh, in case the non-participants are wondering why this hike is called the "muddy butt" hike: Westwoods is sprinkled with steep descents down bedrock passages where even the proud succumb to scooting down the trail on their posteriors.

*Hikers: Don Hagstrom, Sandra Hassan, Ted Kepler,
Dick Krompegal, Lora Miller,
Jack Sanga, Mark Schofield,
Alice, Marianne & Rob Valley, Dan Zelerman.
Leader: Mary O'Neill*



Most Of The Hikers

Inlet of Long Island Sound in the background

The Trail Talk

We Would Like To Hear From You!

It is more and more common for newsletters, like this one, to be E-mailed as a PDF file rather than to mail a hard copy. Not everyone, but more & more are receiving and reading information in front of a computer. E-mailing this letter would save our club printing and postage cost as well as volunteer time assembling the letters. However, not everyone has a computer or fast download. Paper copies will continue to be printed and mailed to those who want them, to post on bulletin boards or to hand out on the trail. If you would like to receive your newsletter as a *.PDF file please E-mail your request to –
gmconnecticut@yahoo.com

To post or review messages or pictures of events, become a member of the message board at -
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ct_green_mountain_club/

Thank You

The MMM Trail

Our club, The CT Section Of The GMC, maintains 12 miles of the Mattabesett Trail in central CT. The Mattabesett Trail is part of the 800 mile blue blazed hiking trail system in CT managed by the Connecticut Forest & Park Association (CFPA).

The information below concerns, in part, the Mattabesett Trail as well as the Metacomet Trail & the Monadnock Trail - The MMM Trail.

Reprinted from CFPA material.

On March 30th, CFPA was joined by Congressman Chris Murphy, Senator Christopher Dodd, and Mike Gildesgame of the Appalachian Mountain Club at a press conference at the Hill-Stead Museum to announce and celebrate the national designation of the MMM Trail. Shortly thereafter, at 3:00, President Obama made the designation official by signing into law H.R. 146, the "Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009."

For more information -
<http://www.ctwoodlands.org/MMM>

Appalachian Trail Conservancy's 37th Biennial Conference and Festival

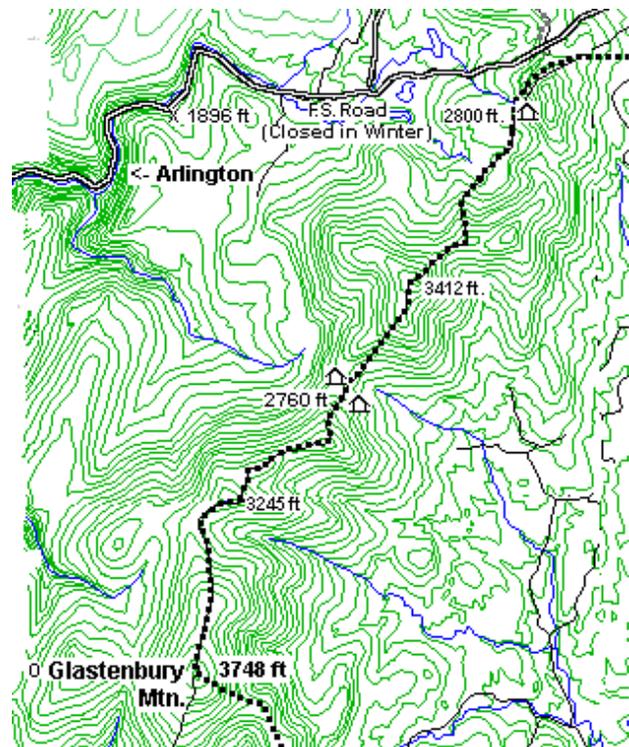
WHAT: Appalachian Trail Conservancy's 37th Biennial Conference and Festival

WHERE: Castleton State College, Castleton, Vermont

WHEN: July 17 - 24, 2009

Vermont's Green Mountain Club hosts the 2009 Appalachian Trail Conservancy Biennial, a week of celebrating and learning about the 2,170-mile Appalachian Trail. Castleton State College is a small liberal arts college located off U.S. Route 4 west of Rutland. The campus overlooks a classic Vermont village of white clapboard houses and shady streets.

For more information -
<http://www.vermont2009.org/>



**The CTGMC Section Of The Long Trail,
Vermont**